



LINCOLN CHAFEE

U.S. SENATOR

RHODE ISLAND

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AQUIDNECK ISLAND SELECTED FOR SMART GROWTH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Lincoln Chafee announced today that Aquidneck Island, R. I. has been selected by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as one of only five communities nationwide to receive assistance from a team of private sector national experts in planning for future growth.

The island's planning commission and municipalities, along with the U.S. Navy, recently completed a redevelopment master plan that aims to protect environmental quality by preserving natural ecosystems and promoting growth in established centers. The Aquidneck Island Planning Commission is seeking assistance to confirm that the plan's goals are aligned with municipal codes and ordinances so that the communities can carry out their vision for the island.

"I am thrilled that the EPA has recognized Aquidneck Island for its invaluable environmental resources, beauty, and uniqueness. Selecting Aquidneck for its Smart Growth program means a meaningful redevelopment plan will be put into place, which will protect and preserve environmental quality, while facilitating economic growth in selected areas," Senator Chafee said. "In addition to funding opportunities, the expert advice which will be made available by the EPA will allow for first-rate assistance to be made available at a minimum cost to the taxpayers of Rhode Island," he continued.

EPA will work with ICF Consulting to provide Aquidneck Island with tools and resources to find innovative ways of sustaining environmentally-sensitive growth and economic progress.

"Smart Growth means development that serves not only the economy, but also the community and our environment," said Robert W. Varney, regional administrator of EPA's New England office. "It's about being good stewards of our communities and of our rural lands, parks and forests. It's about ensuring that the best of the past is preserved, while creating new communities that are attractive, vital, and enduring."

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Aquidneck Island was selected in a competitive process initiated earlier this year, when EPA offered its first request for applicants for "Smart Growth" implementation assistance. The new program responds to a growing number of requests for technical assistance regarding smart growth. Fifty-six communities from 28 states applied. Besides offering future rounds of assistance under this program, EPA will continue to offer informal help to community leaders when requested, speak at community events when possible and appropriate, make its research and publications widely available, and offer grants both to communities for technical assistance and to organizations for research and publications that will help improve development practices.

EPA's Smart Growth program encourages development that protects environmental resources and human health, expands economic opportunity, and enhances the places that people love. EPA's role in smart growth at the community level is to provide information about best practices that have worked in other communities and reduced the environmental effects of development.

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